

Message Text

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60

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

SAJ-01 IO-13 ACDA-07 /087 W
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R 261545Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3130

INFO AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY SOVIA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L BERLIN 6564

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, KN, KS, US

SUBJECT: REACTIONS TO PANMUNJOM INCIDENT.

REF: (A) STATE 211862; (B) BERLIN 5430

1. THE MAJOR EAST BERLIN NEWSPAPERS HAVE CARRIED PARTIAL, SHORT AND COMPLETELY BIASED REPORTS ON RECENT EVENTS IN KOREA, TAKEN MAINLY FROM THE OFFICIAL NORTH KOREAN NEWS AGENCY. THE GENERAL LINE IS THAT US AND SOUTH KOREAN FORCES ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR A "PROFOCATION" IN THE DEMILITARIZED ZONE ON AUGUST 18 AND THAT A "WAR OF NERVES" HAS BEEN CREATED BY THE SUBSEQUENT DISPATCH OF THE CARRIER MIDWAY TO KOREAN WATERS AND THE RENEWAL OF B-52 FLIGHTS FROM OKINAWA OVER "SOUTH KOREA". THE WORD THAT THERE WERE "SOME DEAD AND WOUNDED" FROM THE INITIAL ENCOUNTER WAS MENTIONED FOUR DAYS AFTER THE EVENT. A LATER REPORT REPRINTED FROM A WEST GERMAN NEWS SOURCE RAISES THE QUESTION OF
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WHETHER THE B-52S ARE EQUIPPED WITH NUCLEAR WEAPONS.

2. THERE HAS BEEN NO COMMENTARY ON KOREA IN THE LOCAL PRESS FOR SOME TIME AND NONE RELATING TO THE AUGUST 18 MURDER OF TWO AMERICAN ARMY OFFICERS. WE HAVE NOT SEEN NOR HEARD ANY OFFICIAL GDR COMMENT ABOUT RECENT EVENTS ALTHOUGH THE COVERAGE OF THE NEWS IN THE OFFICIAL PRESS NOTED ABOVE INDICATES A FULLY BIASED ATTITUDE IN FAVOR OF NORTH KOREA. THERE HAS BEEN NO CONNECTION DRAWN BETWEEN RECENT EVENTS AND THE KOREAN QUESTION IN THE UN.

3. WE HAD EXPECTED THAT THE GDR MIGHT AGAIN PROVIDE A FORUM FOR THE NORTH KOREAN EMBASSY TO EXPOUND ITS VIEWS ON THE KOREAN QUESTION AS IT DID IN MARCH (BERLIN 5430). THIS HAS NOT HAPPENED. DENIAL OF SUCH A FORUM TO THE NORTH KOREANS WOULD REPRESENT A CONSCIOUS DECISION BY THE GDR POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND PROBABLY MEANS THAT THE GDR AUTHORITIES MEAN TO DOWNPLAY COVERAGE OF THIS EVENT, AT LEAST FOR THE PRESENT. WE JUDGE THAT GDR REACTION TO THE AUGUST 18 INCIDENT IS PERFUNCTORY. COOPER

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